

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 301328

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 301328

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. SOVIET PRESS ATTACKS MOYNIHAN AND PRESIDENT FORD

THE SOVIET PRESS HAS ATTACKED AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN AND HAS RETURNED VOLLEYS AGAINST FORD'S CRITICISM OF SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA:

--IZVESTIYA, CALLING MOYNIHAN THE "IDOL OF THE ZIONISTS IN THE UN," CHARGES THAT HE IS TRYING TO GAIN FAVOR AMONG ZIONISTS IN NEW YORK IN ORDER TO ASSURE HIMSELF OF AN ELECTORAL VICTORY IN A NEW YORK SENATORIAL OR GUBERNATORIAL RACE.

--PRAVDA ACCUSES THE US OF COLLUSION WITH SOUTH AFRICA AND RHODESIA AND CONCLUDES THAT "CERTAIN FORCES IN THE US -- IMPLICITLY INCLUDING THE PRESIDENT -- WANT TO
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PAGE 02 STATE 301328

COVER UP SUPPORT FOR ARMED INTERVENTION AGAINST THE

LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT OF ANGOLA BY DISCUSSION OF THE
"THREAT OF SOVIET INTERFERENCE" IN THE AREA.

EMBASSY MOSCOW COMMENTS: THE SEVERITY OF MOSCOW'S ATTACKS
ON AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN SHOWS HE "HAS DRAWN SOME BLOOD
HERE." PRAVDA'S ATTACK IS THE MOST EXPLICIT REFERENCE TO

THE PRESIDENT WE HAVE SEEN IN THE SOVIET MEDIA FOR SOME
TIME. IF UNFAVORABLE REFERENCES TO THE PRESIDENT MULTIPLY
THEY WILL AT THE VERY LEAST SIGNAL TO SOVIET READERS SHARP-
LY RISING CONCERN OVER US INTENTIONS. (CONFIDENTIAL) MOS-
COW 18288 AND 18279, 12/22.)

2. PORTUGUESE ECONOMIC MEASURES TIMIDLY AUSTERE

THE FIRST GROUP OF LONG-AWAITED MEASURES DESIGNED TO STABI-
LIZE THE ECONOMY WAS APPROVED AND PUBLISHED BY THE PORTU-
GUESE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ON DECEMBER 20. THE OFFICIAL
COMMUNIQUE NOTED SOME MEASURES WILL ENTAIL SACRIFICE BUT
ARE NECESSARY TO BEGIN ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL RECUPERATION,
REDUCE HEAVY GOP BUDGET DEFICITS, AND DEFEND AGAINST THE
DANGEROUS BALANCE OF PAYMENTS SITUATION. EMBASSY LISBON,
COMMENTING ON THE MEASURES, OBSERVES:

--THE DECISIONS CLEARLY INDICATE THAT THE GOP IS OPT-
ING FOR GRADUAL RATHER THAN ABRUPT IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE AUSTERITY PROGRAM, HOPING TO MINIMIZE THE IMPACT
OF THE PROGRAM ON THE LOWEST INCOME SECTORS.

--THE ANNOUNCED TAX INCREASES ARE THE ONLY GENUINE
AUSTERITY DECISIONS, BUT THEIR IMPORTANCE CANNOT BE
GAUGED UNTIL THE GOP CLARIFIES THE ACTION TAKEN.

THE MEASURES NOTABLY FAILED TO INCLUDE ANY MENTION OF WAGE-
PRICE CONTROLS. AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE WAGE POLICY IS EX-
PECTED FROM A DECEMBER 23 MEETING, WHILE PRICE INCREASES
WILL APPARENTLY BE INTRODUCED LATER BY INDIVIDUAL MINIS-
TRIES. (UNCLASSIFIED) LISBON 7573 AND (LIMITED OFFICIAL
USE) LISBON 7585, 12/22.)

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PAGE 03 STATE 301328

3. LEBANON: TWO MORE SHOOTING DAYS 'TIL CHRISTMAS

AS THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT, SYRIA, AND MODERATE PALESTIN-
IANS ATTEMPT TO HOLD THE CEASE FIRE TOGETHER, EMBASSY BEI-
RUT REPORTS THAT SNIPING CONTINUES, HEAVY FIGHTING HAS
FLARED UP IN THE TOWN OF MANSOURIYAH, AND ARMED MEN HAVE
RETURNED TO SOME BEIRUT STREETS PREVIOUSLY CLEARED.

MEANWHILE, SYRIA HAS BECOME THE FOCUS OF MEDIATION IN THE
CRISIS:

--SYRIAN CHIEF OF STAFF SHEHABI LEFT BEIRUT DECEMBER
21 CALLING HIS NEGOTIATIONS "POSITIVE" DESPITE THE
BERATING HE SUPPOSEDLY TOOK FROM PRESIDENT FRANGIE FOR
SYRIAN AND PALESTINIAN INFILTRATION INTO LEBANON.

--PRIME MINISTER KARAME DEPARTED FOR DAMASCUS THE FOL-
LOWING DAY. THERE HE WILL WORK HARD TO HAVE HIMSELF
INVITED TO THE DAMASCUS SUMMIT MEETING, WHICH WOULD
GROUP HIM WITH ASAD AND SAUDI KING KHALID. (CONFI-
DENTIAL) BEIRUT 15461, 12/22.) KISSINGER

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